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DRL/MLGA LYNN SICADE OR SYLVIA HAMMOND
IO/RHS AMY OSTERMEIER OR DEEPA GHOSH

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/29/2017

TAGS: PHUM PREL KTIA UN BL
SUBJECT: BOLIVIA ON UN 3RD COMMITTEE HUMAN RIGHTS
RESOLUTIONS

REF: STATE 157026

Classified By: DCM Krishna Urs for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

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Summary
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¶11. (C) DCM contacted Bolivian Vice Foreign Minister Hugo Fernandez on November 19 regarding reftel. Fernandez mentioned that Bolivia would take different positions on each of the four human rights resolutions before the UN Third Commission. Only in the case of Burma is Bolivia prepared to fully support a country-specific human rights resolution.
End Summary.

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The Full Score Card
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¶12. (C) Burma) Bolivia will vote for the resolution against Burma, and will vote against a no-action motion. Fernandez pointed to the recent events in Burma -- the Burmese government's crackdown on civil society, the press, democracy activists, and Buddhist monks)- as the reason why the Bolivian government will vote in favor of the human rights resolution against the Yangon regime.

¶13. (C) North Korea -- Bolivia will vote against or abstain on a no-action motion, but will abstain from voting on the North Korea resolution if the no-action motion fails. Fernandez explained that the Bolivian government's position on North Korea was consistent with its previous votes and in line with the G77 block. Fernandez noted that lobbying by the Japanese Embassy in favor of the North Korea resolution may push the Bolivian government to change its position at the last minute. Fernandez mentioned he would approach Foreign Minister David Choquehuanca about changing Bolivia's position tomorrow.

¶14. (C) Belarus -- Bolivia will vote against or abstain on a no-action motion, but will abstain from voting on the Belarus resolution if the no-action motion fails. Fernandez commented that this follows Bolivia's previous votes (and the G77 line) on Belarus.

¶15. (C) Iran) Bolivia will vote in favor of a no-action motion, but will abstain from voting on the Iran resolution if the no-action motion fails. Fernandez explained that Canada had contacted the MFA and stressed the importance of voting in favor of the human rights resolution against Iran.

Not surprisingly given Bolivia's recent opening of diplomatic relations with Iran, despite Canada's best efforts, Bolivia is reversing its previous position of voting against a no-action motion, but has evidently committed to abstaining on the human rights resolution if the no-action motion failed. Fernandez went to great pains to stress that a vote for &no-action8 was not an endorsement of Iran's nuclear program.

GOLDBERG